



For Immediate Release
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Delaware Children's Department Increases Access to Child Mental Health Treatment through Victims of Crime Act Grant

WILMINGTON - The Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families was recently awarded a federal grant in the amount of \$102,840 by the Criminal Justice Council. This grant will be used employ two additional masters level crisis intervention therapists, who will be trained in trauma-specific treatment and practices to increase access to specific mental health treatment for children/families that have been exposed to violence and/or traumatic events.

"There is clearly a need to increase access for city youth to child mental health crisis intervention services and trauma-specific treatment," said Cabinet Secretary Cari DeSantis. "And with the recent unveiling of the Child Development-Community Policing (CD-CP) initiative in the City of Wilmington, having additional staff on hand to assess and treat these kids is crucial."

Unveiled at a joint press conference by the City of Wilmington and the Children's Department, the CD-CP initiative partners mental health professionals with Wilmington police officers in an effort to develop a closer relationship to one another, become familiar with each others' procedures and mandates, strengthen bonds with local community groups and organizations and provide effective mental health treatment for children and their families.

"Just by virtue of training and referral information provided to City Police, the number of children in the City of Wilmington served each month by our Crisis Intervention Services more than doubled," DeSantis said. "The two additional staff that will be hired through this grant money will serve an estimated 400 additional children and families annually."

The Delaware Children's Department provides leadership and advocacy for Delaware's children. The Department's primary responsibility is to provide and manage a range of services for children who have experienced abandonment, abuse, adjudication, mental illness, neglect, or substance abuse, while endorsing a holistic approach to enable children to reach their fullest potential. For more information, please visit <http://www.state.de.us/kids/>.

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